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challenge



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Whether Bush Or Dems, BIG BOSSES STILL WIN IN NOVEMBER

Two of the greatest tasks currently facing a U.S. president are winning popular support for imperialist wars and putting the economy on a wartime footing. The major U.S. capitalists continue to fault Bush as a military leader but give him mixed marks on the economy, even as they boost John Kerry as a possible replacement.

First the main rulers' liberal media complained that Bush's weapons of mass destruction lies were turning public opinion against the war in Iraq. Now it's Bush's dogged avoidance of combat in the Vietnam era that, in contrast to the decorated Kerry, undermines his status as commander in chief. A recent New York Times editorial (2/9) emphasizes that the rulers' first and foremost goal is finding a leader who can rally the masses for war: "When Americans choose a president, their most profound consideration is whether a candidate can make the wisest possible decisions when it comes to war." But these rulers feel Bush squandered a golden opportunity to militarize the nation after 9/11. He sent far too few troops into Afghanistan and Iraq, having failed either to spur recruitment at home or create a UN-backed international alliance.

On the home front, the major capitalists who watch out for their class as a whole, not just for their own

firms, require an economy geared toward war, more tightly controlled from the top. This means increased military spending and more consolidation and government policing of business and industry. They also need a loyal working class won to patriotism and electoral politics.

The rulers fear that Bush's tax cuts will severely hinder any future mobilization of the U.S. war machine. But they praise his efforts in promoting mergers that benefit the major capitalists and cracking down on bosses whose individual greed interferes with the general needs of the ruling class. (See box on page 2.) The liberal media shed crocodile tears for workers in Bush's "jobless recovery." Growing unemployment is actually pushing wages down and profits up. The media's focus on unemployment aims cynically at luring workers to the Democratic Party.

The media are portraying Kerry as a more attractive military leader than Bush, as a "warrior president with a conscience." He fought "gallantly" in Vietnam but returned his medals to protest the war. He voted for the latest Iraq war but "agonized" over the decision. Kerry is also getting coached in the new economic realities. Time Magazine reports (2/8) that Kerry has repeatedly assailed "special interests

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Dead, Wounded GI's Sacrificed on Altar of Halliburton's Profits

The Bush gang's imperialist war has slaughtered tens of thousands of Iraqis, mostly civilians, all to grab Iraqi oil and make huge profits for such as Halliburton (VP Cheney was its CEO), Bechtel, MCI WorldCom, KBR, Dyncorp, etc. Many pundits now claim they were "duped" by the administration's lies about Saddam's Weapons of Mass Destruction.

They weren't duped. They knew the Iraqi exile crew led by Chalabi, the crooked banker wanted for fraud in Jordan, manufactured these lies. Ever since the Clinton administration, the Chalabi-led Iraqi National Congress was getting millions through the State Department to push its tales as the reason to attack Iraq.

But the Bush gang did a lousy job, going it alone without UN cover. Latest Pentagon reports reveal that the invaders' supply system and preparations were so bad that, had they confronted a real army, not the collapsing Iraqi forces, the results would have been disastrous.

Because of all these miscalculations, the war continues for almost a year. Bush's May victory claims atop the Lincoln aircraft carrier made him look like the idiot he may very well be. And still, even after Saddam was captured (more likely by Kurdish forces, handed over to the U.S. Army), more U.S. soldiers and Iraqis are dying daily.

The Bush administration has displayed absolutely no sympathy towards the dead or wounded GI's in Iraq. Besides the 500-plus already killed, "9,000 servicemen and women have been wounded, sickened or injured....[and] 6,891 troops medically evacuated for non-combat conditions between March 19 and Oct. 30, 2003" (Charlotte Post-Gazette, 2/9).

"There are about 2,500 combat casualties," said Dave Autry of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV). "The rest are attempted suicides, vehicle accidents, other accidents, illness. Something that's becoming a big concern is lesions caused by exposure to sand fleas that carry a particularly virulent bacteria."

The Post-Gazette adds: "...the scandal is what is happening to these survivors once their government brings them home. Tom Keller, the immediate past commander of the DAV in Ohio, wrote to me [Autry] last

month about the secretive nature of the process.... 'Tom...[feels] the Bush administration is bringing the casualties back to the States in the middle of the night...to keep organizations like the DAV away from them.... to keep the American people in the dark about the number of troops being wounded, the severity of the injuries they are receiving and the types of illnesses that may be surfacing.'"

Besides these obvious political reasons to hide the human cost of this imperialist war, there's also the classic capitalist reason: money. "It appears the government does not want these veterans even to be aware of, let alone receive, the benefits due them for donating their limbs and their souls and their innocence..." (Post-Gazette)

The DAV's executive director, David Gorman, who left both his legs in Vietnam over 30 years ago, wrote Secretary of War Donald Rumsfeld: "For more than six decades the DAV has always been granted access to military hospitals so our professionally-trained and fully-accredited representatives could provide such crucial information and counseling to service members to help smooth their transition from military to civilian life. Sadly, that is no longer the case. The current policies of the Department of Defense citing the Privacy Act and security are preventing our skilled representatives from carrying out our congressionally-chartered mission."

"At one facility in particular — Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. — our efforts to visit with wounded patients have been severely restricted.... Headquarters...selects the patients we may visit and strictly limits information about the patients. Even the patient's name and the nature of the injury are withheld without express permission."

Soldiers in the bosses' army are used like workers in civilian life: as cannon fodder in the bosses' endless war for profits, and then discarded when they're no longer needed. During the Vietnam war, soldiers and sailors rebelled en masse. Instead of fighting the Vietnamese rebels, they fraged (threw grenades at) their officers. How long before this begins happening in Iraq or in other imperialist wars hatched by U.S. bosses? ☛

Haitian Workers Must Unite Vs. Pro-Duvalier Thugs, Aristide

The endless wars and economic downturns that mark the failure of capitalism to provide the most basic necessities to billions worldwide has spawned another rebellion in Latin America. This time it's in Haiti, against the regime of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, whose own corruption and fall from grace with the Bush administration has made life even more hellish for the masses.

The rebellion — which has turned mainly into a right-wing uprising — erupted in the Artibonite Valley, where small rice growers have been particularly hard-hit by importation of cheap, subsidized foreign rice. Perhaps here, even more than elsewhere in Haiti, people are starving and have nothing to lose.

For several months, both the cops and Aristide's gangs have viciously attacked mass demonstrations of students and workers. Recently, cities and towns in the Artibonite region, including population centers Gonaïves and St. Marc, have been seized by armed rebels. They have stormed police stations — key targets because they're seen as a political arm of Aristide's repression — and freed prisoners. Aristide's cops were trained by Raymond Kelly — currently NYC police commissioner — as part of the last U.S. occupation that returned Aristide to power during the Clinton administration.

CIA-Trained Duvalier Thugs Return

The opposition is composed of several groups, one supported by elements in the Bush administration and by former CIA-trained Duvalier thugs, like the para-military FRAPH group. When 20,000 U.S. troops invaded Haiti in 1994 to return Aristide to power, the FRAPH files were seized and

hidden from the public since they exposed the CIA connection.

The other opposition side is composed of former Aristide supporters. It includes paramilitary groups previously armed by Aristide, who they had supported until a falling out among these thieves last fall.

There is another group formed by the Democratic Platform, a coalition of the Group of 184 and the Democratic Convergence. The Group of 184 (named for the original number of member civil organizations — businessmen, professionals, peasants, unions, students, women) is headed by industrialist Andy Arpaid, who has extensive holdings in Haiti and Miami. Democratic Convergence comprises small, historically anti-Duvalier political parties now opposed to Aristide. One key member is OPL (Organization of People in Struggle), which split from Aristide's Lavalas Party several years ago. It's led by Gerard Pierre-Charles, a "leftist" with ties to Cuba. The so-called left-wing opposition, however, has scarcely tried to distance itself from the right-wing opposition.

The Democratic Platform was forced to cancel a Feb. 12 march in Port-au-Prince

because of threats by pro-Aristide forces, who erected burning barricades in the Canapé Vert section before dawn and prevented medical staff from working at a neighborhood hospital.

Like François "Papa Doc" Duvalier before him, Aristide came into power as a democrat with the support of workers, peasants and students. He quickly went from savior to devil with the aid of armed, organized thugs: today's armed chimeres ("bandits" in Creole), increasingly 12- to 14-year-olds recruited in the slums of Port-au-Prince, are yesterday's Tonton Macoute.

Recently Aristide signed several agreements impoverishing the masses even more, including concessions to the International Monetary Fund. Cuts in food and transportation subsidies have added to Aristide's growing unpopularity with the working class. The government has promised 13 free-trade zones which normally grant corporations freedom from taxes and any kind of labor standards. Two are already functioning on the border with the Dominican Republic.

Meanwhile, the imperialists are licking



their chops. France is threatening to intervene, perhaps wanting to crush Aristide for having demanded that France repay the billions of dollars (in today's terms) that it extorted from the newly-independent Haiti 200 years ago. Washington is also moving towards intervention if Aristide doesn't step down, either through its puppets in Caricom (Caribbean governments' association) or through calling on Canada and the U.N., and is preparing to repel any refugees that may flee to Florida. U.S. initiatives have blocked at least \$145 million in badly-needed foreign aid packages.

Like in all recent mass uprisings in neighboring Dominican Republic and in Bolivia, workers, youths and their allies in Haiti need a revolutionary red leadership so that their fight-back isn't wasted supporting the Aristide regime or the bourgeois opposition. History teaches us that the only way to take on the class enemy is by "rache manyòk," that is, pulling it out by the roots and creating a new system based on workers' power. International working-class solidarity and communist leadership is the road out of this hell. That's PLP's goal. Join us!✊

Last April, U.S. Attorney-General Ashcroft said Haitians posed a "threat" to U.S. national security because Haiti was a transit point for Islamic terrorists, making it virtually impossible for Haitians to get refugee status in the U.S. It allows the U.S. to detain undocumented Haitians indefinitely. Now, the racist-inspired fear that tens of thousands of Haitian workers and peasants will land on the shores of Florida — fleeing both the violence and poverty imposed upon them by the world's capitalists — has led

to pre-emptive plans by Bush & Co. to intercept the refugees on the high seas and return them to Haiti.

According to one Miami observer, the State Department has even contacted relief organizations for help in opening the doors to the concentration camp in Guantanamo Bay for 50,000 refugees. Guantanamo is where 70,000 Haitian refugees were incarcerated from 1991-1994. Then U.S. bosses sent 20,000 U.S. troops to restore Aristide to power following his deposeal in a military coup.✊

Morgan-Chase Still Win in November

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and greedy corporations" on his primary tour. But now Harold Ickes, Jr., who steered Clinton's 1996 re-election bid, "is criticizing a central theme of Senator John Kerry's campaign for President: populist attacks on 'special interests.'" (New York Observer, 2/15) Ickes' point is that the interests of Exxon Mobil and JP Morgan Chase are, and should be, what drives U.S. policy. Ickes knows a thing or two about reorganizing society to benefit the bigger capitalists. His father was a top advisor to Franklin Roosevelt during the last full U.S. wartime mobilization.

Kerry may well unseat Bush. Bush may well keep the White House. A dark horse might emerge. We don't have a crystal ball. But one thing is certain: the capitalist class, which is the real party of war, will win at the polls in November. Capitalism cannot be voted out. Getting rid of the system that brings wars without end and constant mass unemployment will take a communist revolution.✊

Liberal Bosses Laud Bush On Mega-Mergers

Business Week (2/23) extols Bush's Justice Department for its ongoing criminal prosecutions of Adelphia, Martha Stewart, Worldcom, Credit Suisse First Boston, Healthsouth, and Enron. It also gave a glowing first-year evaluation of William Donaldson, the Securities and Exchange Commission chief who has hired 1,000 "securities enforcers" to see that Wall Street does the rulers' bidding.

The liberal media have blessed mega-mergers in finance, such as Bank of America's takeover of Fleet and JP Morgan Chase's impending buyout of Bank One. But they call on Bush to exercise greater scrutiny of the proposed Comcast-Disney deal. The rulers worry that Microsoft, Comcast's largest shareholder, will gain too much influence from it. Microsoft has run afoul of the big boys before and been swatted down for it in a huge anti-trust case. One of Microsoft's sins was selling advanced technologies indiscriminately to potential U.S. enemies like China.✊

WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

✊PLP fights to smash capitalism—wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. The Soviet Union and China returned to capitalism because socialism maintained too many aspects of the profit system, like wages and divisions of labor.

✊Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism. This fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

✊Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profit. Everyone will share society's benefits and burdens.

✊Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

✊Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

✊Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✊Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers.

JOIN US!

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Workers Reject School Bosses-Union Gang-up

BALTIMORE, Feb. 13 — During any reform struggle against the abuses of capitalism, the most important measure of success is the degree of growth among workers and youth in real understanding of communism and the growth of Progressive Labor Party. Both of these were in evidence as teachers here resoundingly rejected major pay cuts in two successive union votes, six days apart. Amid a flurry of CHALLENGE sales, distribution of over 1,600 PLP leaflets and a PLP teacher's speech to a rally at a School Board meeting, several teachers — for the very first time — have begun to attend PLP club meetings.

On Feb. 6, thousands of teachers braved an ice storm, waiting for hours in snarled traffic and freezing outdoor lines, to get into a high school auditorium for the first of two union votes. Teachers and paraprofessionals eagerly took about 700 PL flyers. When one comrade distributing the flyers would say, "Vote no to furloughs, no to layoffs, and no to capitalism!" some who did-

n't stop at first said, "Yeah, let me have one of those," after hearing the part about "No to capitalism!"

Teachers rejected furloughs and a 7% pay cut for the remainder of this school year, the majority voting for "None of the above."

Three days later in Annapolis, thousands of people from Baltimore City and from counties throughout Maryland participated in the largest state-wide rally in recent memory, demanding more state funding for public education. Marchers took about 800 PL flyers and bought 50 CHALLENGES at that event where PLP high school students joined their parents and teachers.

Then in Baltimore on the next day, teachers jammed the School Board meeting, the adjoining lobby and the steps outside, angrily opposing any cuts in pay or staff. When a PLP'er spoke to the rally, condemning racism, teachers eagerly asked for PLP flyers.

After the first "No" vote, Mayor O'Malley

suddenly "found" \$8 million. Then the Mayor and Bonnie Copeland, school system CEO, "offered" a new deal, a 3.5% pay cut. If rejected, they threatened again to lay off up to 1,200 teachers and/or invoke involuntary wage-cuts that would brazenly violate the union contract.

When O'Malley announced this new "offer," Baltimore Teachers' Union president Marietta English thanked him and then treacherously explained her hope, on live television, that teachers should vote for the wage cut! But when it soon became clear this position would isolate her from masses of teachers, she backtracked, saying teachers should vote as they see fit. Like most of today's U.S. union leaders, she's loyal to capitalism. Her co-president, Loretta Johnson — head of the union's paraprofessional chapter and a national union VP — told one teacher that the leadership wouldn't help him if he were jailed or fired for organizing a sick-out against layoffs.

In Maryland, a state law bans teachers' strikes. Rather than breaking that bosses' rule, union leaders have consistently told teachers a strike is unwinnable. Actually, many workers won the right to strike by striking illegally! While workers can't win every battle in the war with capitalism, rolling over and playing dead is a sure loser. Playing by the bosses' rules is self-defeating.

Angry teachers and paraprofessionals answered the 3.5% pay-cut "offer" with a resounding "No!" vote of 3,824 to 1,402, delivering a stinging rebuke to the Mayor,



December 9th—A demonstrator at the Board of Education meeting is 'escorted' out by security.

the School Board and the CEO. Custodians, cafeteria workers and secretaries in two other unions did likewise.

Within this militancy, PLP's revolutionary communist ideas have played a modest but growing role. The teachers who attended the PLP club meeting had lots of questions and friendly disagreements. They all enjoyed participating in an exciting discussion about communism, one based on a series of inspiring essays about the Soviet Union by the poet Langston Hughes, expressing his personal observations after living in the Soviet Union for a year. These teachers plan to return to the next club meeting, which will discuss Lenin's "What Is To Be Done."

These developments are precisely what's needed to do better in upcoming struggles, especially in the decisive struggle to finally put an end to the dictatorship of the capitalist class!✪

RACISM RULES THE ROOST FOR BALTIMORE'S STUDENTS

The Baltimore School Board claims there's a \$58 million deficit, a burden they've tried to thrust onto the backs of school workers (see CHALLENGE, 2/18). But the bigger issue is racism. Baltimore's public schools — in which 90% of the students are African American — need \$250 million more each year for per-pupil funding to equal Maryland's richer, mostly white counties. During the approximate four years of deficit growth, City schools — if funded equally — would have received an additional billion dollars, far more than this \$58 million. Thus, the threatened pay and job cuts mainly stem from racist inequality. The Greater Baltimore Committee (CEO Copeland used to be its Executive V-P) comprises the area's most powerful businesses, and has contempt for the City's working-class students. The schools are preparing most of them either to compete for unskilled and semi-skilled, low-wage jobs, or for unemployment-induced military service, or jail. The rulers' attack on teachers reflects a more fundamental, racist attack upon Baltimore's mostly African American students.✪

Braceros Battle 60-yr-old U.S. Billion \$windle

MEXICO CITY, Feb. 9 — Some

4,000 of the previous braceros and supporters marched today to the Presidential Palace, stopping to picket the U.S. embassy, demanding return of the money stolen from them during the U.S. "guest workers" program, 1942 to 1966. Ten percent was deducted from their U.S. wages — \$1 BILLION — and allegedly placed in a pension fund in the Wells Fargo Bank, which sent the money to the now defunct National Rural Credit Bank of Mexico (Banrural). The money was probably stolen. So far these two million workers (totaling five million bracero contracts) involved in the previous bracero program (or their relatives) have seen zilch of that money. With interest it would probably be triple the original billion.

Earlier, 2,000 angry former braceros and supporters stormed President Fox's family ranch in the state of Guanajuato and reached his mother's house. Supposedly, she fainted when she saw the protestors, but the latter said they never saw Mrs. Fox. They said they acted because they're tired of waiting for what belongs to them.

Fox reacted angrily, saying he won't allow this "violation of private property." But that stolen \$1 billion is these



farmworkers' property. Capitalism only respects the bosses' property — the profits workers produce for the bosses' system (surplus value). To steal from workers through the horrible racist exploitation of these braceros (see letter page 6) or through the 10% scheme is fair game and very much legal under capitalism. This racist robbery will be part and parcel of Bush's new bracero "immigration reform" plan.

Under communism, private property won't exist. All property will belong to the working class, the class that produces all value. There'll be no braceros or "immigration problem" because there'll be no borders.✪

RACIST POLICE MURDER IN GEORGIA

I write to make you aware of the fact that the so-called "law enforcement" in Columbus, Georgia, brutally murdered another innocent, unarmed African American male, a senseless tragedy that is all too familiar in this country. Kenneth "Kenny" Walker was an extremely close friend.

On Jan. 28, a local sheriff's special unit targeted four black men, riding in an expensive SUV, as possible "drug suspects." Actually all four were college graduates, never "in trouble" with the law. These four innocent men were dragged from their vehicle at gunpoint, and forced to lie on the side of a major Interstate like animals. Simultaneously, one of the "John Wayne" sheriffs made a conscious decision to shoot Kenny twice in the forehead with an assault rifle.

This coward claimed that he made a "judgment call" because he "couldn't see" Kenny's right hand. While Kenny lay dying on the roadside, the bastards — knowing full well that they had targeted the wrong vehicle — placed the other three in three separate cars and held them in three separate cells. Kenny had been shot at 9:00 p.m. but his family was not notified until 1:30 a.m., never getting a chance to say their farewells because he died before they arrived.

Of course, they found no guns or contraband in the vehicle. Six hours later they released the other men. They gave the driver his keys and said, "You're free to go; by the way your friend is dead."

Kenny Walker was a loving husband, devoted father and a responsible civic-oriented individual, involved in his local community. Kenny had never been in trouble with the law; when they pulled his record, they couldn't even find a speeding ticket! If you're a black male in this country, no matter how righteous, your life comes down to a "judgment call."

To add insult to injustice, this tragedy is being stonewalled and quietly swept under the rug by local government officials. The entire incident was caught on tape, but the Sheriff's Department is refusing to release it, although it's a matter of public record under the "Freedom of Information" Act.

Columbus is a small town. The "Good Old Boy" network is very much alive here and the longer they hold the tape, the more likely it will be altered or disappear altogether. If this had happened in a major city it would have gained national attention by now.

A Friend

✪CAPITALIST JUSTICE✪

Once again the capitalist courts have proven to be on the side of the bosses. New York City Housing cop Richard Neri was cleared of all criminal charges after murdering Timothy Stansbury on the roof top of a housing complex. Despite the lies put forward by liberal 'misleaders' who sided with Mayor Bloomberg and Police Chief Kelley when they sympathized with the Stansbury family, the courts or politicians can't be trusted to fight racist police terror.

PLP Youth Conference Highlights Fight vs. Fascism



For two months some PLP youth organized for what turned out to be a successful day-long forum on imperialism and fascism, and the need for communist revolution. Our efforts brought some 50 campus friends and others from our mass organizations and that strengthened the PLP youths' revolutionary politics. Overall it led to formation of a PLP club and to various people joining the Party; others agreed to join study groups.

We presented imperialism as a modern stage of capitalism and that imperialism and fascism cannot be separated from capitalism. It was also discussed how imperialism sharpens capitalism's con-

traditions, and historically has led to more misery for the international working class and to world war. We highlighted the need for communist revolution and the importance of base-building in both the working class and the military. This culminated in the final presentation on the need to organize now for the long-term fight to turn the current imperialist dogfight into a massive revolutionary struggle led by communists.

We also studied fascism, how it's an extreme attack on the working class so the murderous profit system can try to get out of their crisis and keep on exploiting and murdering workers. After presenting its historical context, we then noted the signs of fascism developing in the U.S. The ruling class has been implementing fascism as inter-imperialist rivalries and the instabilities of capitalism shake their position. This emphasized the importance to learn from both the achievements of past revolutionaries — particularly during World War II,

when the world communist movement led by the Soviet Red Army defeated the bulk of the German-Italian-Japanese fascist axis — as well as the movement's mistakes.

The latter had forged a United Front with "anti-fascist forces" like "lesser evil" capitalists, union misleaders and liberals (social democrats), thinking their help was needed in fighting fascism. This flawed theory and practice hid the fact that capitalism — not just certain capitalists — was the true source of fascism. In Italy communists led hundreds of thousands of armed partisans, defeated six Nazi divisions and liberated most of the north, while hanging Mussolini and his mistress. But the Italian Communist Party abandoned the dictatorship of the proletariat. This allowed the Christian Democrat/Vatican/Mafia axis — backed by the U.S. — to take power after the war.

The discussions were among the most important parts of the forum. Each presentation was followed by a general discussion and then a breakout session

with many smaller groups which later reported back to each other. Each group had a question guide dealing with nationalism, racism and the military in relation to imperialism.

Even more productive discussions dealt with practice, with the use of CHALLENGE, with spreading communist ideas while working in mass groups and winning people to the Party when the ruling class is trying to mislead the masses into anti-Bush politicians. The latter's only disagreement with the Bushites is over the tactics of how to make war and impose fascism. The breakout groups gave everyone, especially people new to these ideas, the chance to ask questions and deal with any of their concerns.

By the end, most feedback was positive; CHALLENGES were quickly gobbled up. The PLP youth felt empowered and many others felt inspired to fight for communism. Capitalism — imperialism and fascism — watch out! ☛

Anti-Racist Students Flush Mr. Pipes

BERKELEY, CA, Feb. 10 — "Racist! Racist! Racist!" chanted at least 50 students against the racist Daniel Pipes here tonight. We interrupted his speech several times, booing and ranking him out as a fascist and racist. Our bold attack startled Pipes; he fumbled to get back on track.

Pipes heads the Middle East Forum, a neo-conservative group pushing for racial profiling against Arabs and Muslims. He labeled the Muslim students' organization "terrorist" and called for war against "militant Islam." He listed how many Israelis had died in Palestinian bombings, but ignored the much larger number of Palestinians killed by Israeli "Defense" Forces. His racism was clear. The racial profiling he calls for is part of a fascist police state.

The anti-racist students showed courage to disrupt Pipes, despite the tons of cops filming everything. But most people don't think of racists like Pipes being part of a bigger movement toward fascism. However, CHALLENGE'S communist

analysis reveals that larger picture: the Patriot Act/Homeland Security police state; a massive, racist prison build-up, complete with prison slave labor; "disappeared" prisoners held indefinitely in Guantanamo Bay; genocidal sanctions and war for oil against Iraq; and cutbacks in vital social services, among other things.

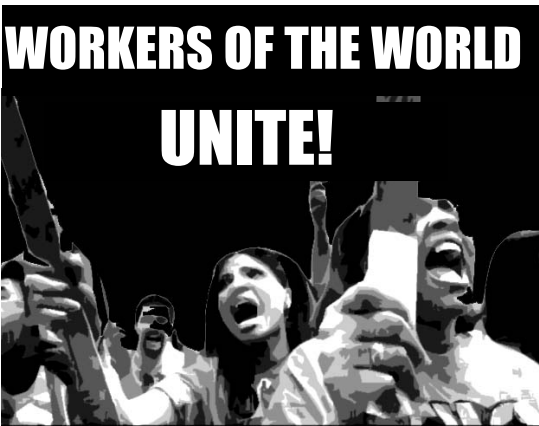
Some students who understand the implications of the fascist "security" developments unfortunately

then fear protesting militantly. But our willingness to fight fascism is our best protection.

That's the lesson of the PLP-led attack against the Nazis on the latter's turf in

Chicago's Marquette Park (see page 8).

Young people here in the Bay Area are learning how to fight fascism and build a revolutionary communist party to flush the Daniel Pipes and all other racists and fascists into the sewage of history. ☛



300,000 WORKERS, YOUTH AND ELDERLY, LEFT IN THE COLD

CHICAGO, IL — A trial of fire and ice is the racist winter ritual for workers and the unemployed under capitalism.

On February 3, 56-year old Sterling Coleman was found frozen to death in his South Side basement apartment. The previous week an unidentified homeless man was found frozen to death under a bridge overlooking the Chicago River.

On February 10, a 46-year old woman and her 2-year old grandson were killed in a deadly apartment blaze. Almost every day fires injure,

in 2001. Even though he just started a new job, they will continue to live with towels stuffed under the doors to keep the cold air out.

Utilities are prohibited from turning off gas service from November through March. But 10,000 households whose gas was shut off before November have not been reconnected. Millions of dollars in federal assistance ran out in late December. April and Alvin owe \$5,207, but received only \$600 in federal assistance. Peoples Gas is demanding full payment.

"...10,000 households whose gas was shut off before November have not been reconnected."

kill or make poor people homeless who are just trying to stay warm in their fire-trap apartments. Two disabled women died in house fires last December. Both were wheelchair-bound, and their gas had been shut off. In one case, a toaster oven was being used to heat the home. The other fire was caused by a space heater.

April and Alvin use two kerosene heaters, three electric space heaters and layers of sweaters and coats to try to keep themselves and their four grandchildren warm. The gas was shut off in their South Side flat in October. April receives disability payments and Alvin has been unable to find steady work since he lost his job

While there are more workers needing of assistance, with over three million jobs destroyed since January 2001, less aid is available. The money is being used to finance the occupation of Iraqi oil fields, pay for the fascist Homeland Security police state, and line the pockets of the billionaires who profit from all of this — on top of their huge tax cuts. Capitalism will never meet our needs. Build a mass PLP and fight for communist revolution to destroy the fascist warmakers, who would have us freeze or burn to maintain their profits. ☛

County Hospital Workers Fight Racist Attacks

CHICAGO, IL, Feb. 16 — After 18 years here, Martha often looks out on the snow-clogged streets and wishes she could see the warm green countryside in south India and see her children grow up with their grandparents. But then she remembers the impossible poverty. Brenda grew up here and some days she would like to just walk out of this damned County job where they try to work you to death and treat you like you're stupid. They swipe in at the time clock, glance at each other, but don't speak. Their boss thinks he's got them where he wants them.

But for the last two weeks, PLP has been fighting racism in the Respiratory Care Department of Stroger Cook County Hospital. The bosses are threatening to fire all the higher seniority, mostly black licensed therapists if they do not pass the certification exam by March 31. They act like these experienced workers, licensed by the State and assigned to the most complex patients, are suddenly unable to do their jobs. They plan to replace them with a few of the most senior, certified Indian therapists, while maintaining a two-tier wage system.

We distributed more than 150 CHALLENGES and hundreds of PLP fliers, relying on our network of regular CHALLENGE readers and distributors. This has created quite a buzz, with many discussions about racism as the cutting edge of fascism, the role of the union (SEIU),

nationalism, and about the PLP. Also, a group of black, white and immigrant workers and professionals, including some therapists, have collected over 100 signatures on a petition demanding that none of the black workers be fired and that all of the Indian workers be upgraded.

The response has been mixed. Some of the Indian therapists felt they were unfairly accused of being racist toward their co-workers. One said he understood the racist attack against the Indian technicians, but didn't understand why it was racist to require the black therapists to take the test, especially when the department's Director is black and certified. Others asked how this could be racism when there are no white managers or workers in the department.

All this made us realize we need to do a better job of explaining a communist understanding of racism, how it is the fiber that holds the profit system together and the cutting edge of developing fascism and imperialist war, and how communist revolution offers the only path to destroying racism.

There seems to be increasing unity in the Respiratory Department. Even if some don't agree with us most techs and therapists don't want anyone fired. We have personal ties with most of them. Those we're closest to are helping circulate Party literature and the petition. Two ther-



apists, one black and the other Indian, criticized SEIU for not leading this fight.

We will get more practice fighting for the Party's line by inviting people to May Day, winning new readers and distributors of CHALLENGE (about 20 more this past issue), and recruiting more workers to PLP. The boss's job is to squeeze the most possible work out of three dozen therapists and save money for the big bosses. The job of the dozens of techs and therapists is to keep people alive. Our patients need oxygen, and workers who know how to hook it up for them. The job of communists is to build a mass, international PLP and lead the working class to power.☸

Limiting Malpractice Awards: ANOTHER RIGHT-WING MOVEMENT?

ANNAPOLIS, MD. Jan. 21, - Over 2,000 doctors rallied at the Maryland Statehouse, calling for limits to monetary damage awards for medical malpractice. A PLP'er and a group of medical residents and students from Prince George's County Hospital Center (which mainly serves poor patients) went with 30 of the hospital's attending physicians to assess the growing movement around this issue.

The ruling class views health care for the working class as a needless expense. As long as there are enough workers able to make profits for the capitalists each day, the rest can be left untreated. That's why over 44 million people in the U.S. have no health insurance and millions more are locked into abusive, limited HMOs. We workers care greatly, though, about the health of our class, so the rulers are constantly proposing various plans to distract us from the basic truth about capitalist health care — profits must be increased by cutting health care. Physicians and other health care professionals are caught in this fundamental contradiction.

The malpractice limitation movement — encouraged by Bush in his State of the Union message and reinforced by Maryland's Republican Governor Ehrlich at the rally — targets the working class, as do most other health reform measures currently being debated. Here's how:

OB-GYN physicians told the Annapolis rally how they could no longer practice obstetrics because the cost of malpractice insurance for delivering babies is too high while health insurers pay less than ever for delivering babies. Caught between rising insurance costs and lower payments, many are quitting entirely, while others are limiting their practice to the safer office practice of gynecology alone. The Bush/Ehrlich solution: put a limit on settlements for injured or killed patients. This policy, they argue, would lower rates for malpractice insurance and thus allow doctors' bills to stay under HMO/health insurance limits, keeping the health insurance companies happy.

Why not go after the multi-billion-dollar insurance companies instead of injured workers? Because the ruling class makes money from robust profit margins in insurance companies, and none from injured workers. When physicians organize a movement led by capitalists, they're attacking workers, accepting the norms of capitalism, and objectively joining the forces of fascism. Instead they should join with workers in fighting the insurance companies and their ruling-class cohorts.

The Plight of Worker/Patients

Malpractice payment is no solution for a societal problem, but it may be the only way for a worker to cover rehabilitation costs or for a family to survive in dire medical circumstances. This creates distrust between patient and physician. Science may not even enter the equation. If a baby is not normal at birth, damages from a malpractice claim may be needed for future expenses, whether or not the physician or hospital were negligent. Juries may agree and settlements arranged in order to solve the family's problem. Demands on physicians for documentation to cover themselves have escalated, detracting from time to talk with patients and families or read the latest journals. So capitalism works against a decent health care delivery system.

Malpractice payments for a few cannot substitute for a system that serves all workers. But this cannot happen unless the workers themselves run society and make decisions about handling health issues. Without a system that provides safer care and supports workers when they're sick due to natural illness or malpractice, fighting among lawyers, insurers, politicians and professionals will continue to destroy the ability to treat worker/patients. But that's the name of the capitalist game: profits come first. (For a useful article on this subject, see the New England Journal of Medicine, 1/15,03.)☸

Forum Traces Spead of HIV-AIDS to U.S. Racism

WASHINGTON, D.C., Jan. 21 — An animated hour of discussion among public health activists and 25 parents of pre-schoolers at the Northwest Settlement House here about the causes of HIV/AIDS ignited a political discussion about capitalism and the strategies for defeating it, including a revolutionary one.

To spark the conversation, the Racial Disparities Committee of the Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association had written a short fictional account about "Bernard," a 27-year-old neighborhood African-American man from the neighborhood whose family had been systematically harmed by racist U.S. policies, beginning with housing discrimination after World War II. "Bernard" suffered poor educational and job opportunities, became involved in a relationship with a woman in the drug trade, did a stint in prison followed by efforts at rehabilitation and finally stable employment in landscaping. In the story, this outcome came too late to prevent his developing renal failure due to the HIV virus and requiring dialysis. We asked the audience, "Why Did Bernard Get HIV/AIDS?"

Initially, the pre-schooler parents blamed it on "Bernard's" parents and teachers. But the discussion moved quickly to blaming the government for not providing better education and jobs over past decades, and for pushing drugs in the community. The parents advanced many strategies for fighting this. Several volunteered to get involved in more political and educational programs around HIV/AIDS.

"Bernard's story" became an excellent starting point to expose capitalism as the cause of these problems and reveal a revolutionary strategy to defeat it. For others involved in public health education work, or for other interested parties, the script is available at www.plp.org, or from the PLP office.☸

The History of Malpractice Insurance in the U.S.

In the 1960s and 1970s, barriers to suing doctors for malpractice were reduced. Patients at charity hospitals were able to sue physicians and national standards of care were increasingly developed. Lawsuits rose sharply in some states, and malpractice insurance carriers left as total pay-outs increased. From the 1970s to the 1980s, states had to develop special boards, arbitrators and other ways of keeping the system in balance. Higher insurance rates charged to doctors lured insurers back into the market, but once again more cases and higher settlements have driven them out. Reforms never consistently decreased the number of claims, claim payouts or doctors' malpractice costs. Patients suffering injury often don't sue so current methods don't compensate injured parties.

Today, the issue is more complex, as medical science is also more complex. Doctors' ability to raise fees to cover malpractice is limited by HMOs and Medicare cost restrictions. The patient safety movement realizes that many errors and injuries arise from systemic problems and are not necessarily due to physician negligence. Physicians are encouraged to disclose their mistakes to fit in with a concept of "blameless" problem-solving but still fear litigation if error is admitted.☸

LETTERS

New Bracero Plan: Same Old Robbery

If the rulers of the USA and Mexico re-establish the bracero program, it won't differ from the old system. And the bosses will be the big winners.

Bush's new proposal, accepted by Mexico's President Vicente Fox, will repeat the same racist super-exploitation and robbery of the old bracero program. As contract labor, they can be easily controlled. Violators will be chased by the Migra (Immigration Service) and deported. The same applies for other "liberal" immigration reform plans, like the "Dream Act, which aims to create illusions among immigrant youth about capitalism and win their loyalty to U.S. imperialism's endless wars.

Since the Fox government is even less capable of creating jobs than the Bush gang, it needs to export workers. Fox figures he can get away with the massive job losses Mexico has seen in the last couple of years by sending workers to the U.S., where they need even cheaper labor. The billions sent by Mexican workers in the U.S. to their relatives back home has become one of the biggest sources of foreign exchange after PEMEX (state-owned oil company) and tourism. On top of that, the bosses may figure they can get away with the same scheme in which they stole \$1 billion from the old braceros, taking 10% of their wages for a so-called pension fund, money which they've never seen. (See article, page 3)

For U.S. bosses, the bracero program is a good source of super-profits, and lowers wages for all workers. In the old bracero program, farmworkers were paid 80¢ an hour, far less than the minimum wage.

Workers were told the lie that if they worked hard, their contract would be renewed. They competed with each other to work harder and harder, increasing productivity and the bosses' profits. That's why many workers preferred to be undocumented rather than a bracero or "guest worker."

This is also part of the bosses' ideology: convince workers to feel "since we're going to be screwed anyway, I'd rather be screwed this way than that way, and maybe I can get out of this hell by 'making it' and becoming a straw boss or a foreman."

Mexico's government aided that ideological attack against workers by telling the braceros, "make sure you represent your country well in the U.S., work hard and send your money back so the country can progress." Well, the old braceros — now fighting to get back those stolen wages — are seeing the bosses' lies first-hand.

Only class-consciousness can counter this divisive ideology. Whether workers are braceros, undocumented, documented or citizens, we're all part of the international working class. We must fight for jobs and decent living conditions wherever we are.

But this class concept won't fall from the sky. Communists must bring it. That's what PLP has been trying to do in its many years of organizing among California's farmworkers. Let's fight for communism, with no borders, where production serves our needs as workers.

A veteran California farmworker



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'Kill 'em — There Are More Where Those Soldiers Came From'

Mel Gibson is in the news for his movie "The Passion of Christ," depicting Jesus' last hours. It's basically a new "Protocols of Zion," the forgery created by the Tsar's secret police a century ago and used to justify the pogroms that murdered thousands of Jews in Russia and Eastern Europe. This forgery was then spread worldwide by Henry Ford, and became one of the Nazis' ideological weapons to carry out their holocaust.

But this letter concerns one of Gibson's few good roles (probably the only one): "Braveheart." It depicted the power struggle between the Scottish and English ruling classes. It also exposed the Scottish rulers' betrayal of the Scottish people who fought the English King.

One great scene reveals the rulers' view of their own soldiers throughout millenniums of class struggles. When the English and Scottish soldiers were fighting in close combat. King Edward I ordered his archers to shoot at random. One Knight told the King, "But our men will die too." The King replied that there are many more to take their place.

During the 1980's Iraq-Iran war (when the Reagan-Bush, Sr.-Cheney-Rumsfeld crowd sided with Saddam Hussein), the Iranian Ayatollahs (today buddies with the British and helping the U.S. in Iraq) used young children as martyrs, sending them in droves to clear mine fields planted by the Iraqi army. Their "martyrdom" would guarantee them "a place in paradise." These were never the children of Iran's Ayatollahs or rich bosses.

Today, Dubya, Blair, Rumsfeld and Spain's Aznar couldn't care less about the "Coalition" soldiers being killed in Iraq, since they know there are many more workers back home to take their places. They don't even care to honor or visit the war's casualties (see front page).

At some point, soldiers worldwide will realize there's no honor in dying for any capitalist. We should do our utmost to ensure this happens sooner rather than later.

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Bosses' Borders Devastate Families

I'm a Party member in Mexico. Two years ago some friends and myself were fired from a factory for disagreeing with the bosses and being a threat to them and the union leaders.

For these two long years I've had a lot of trouble finding a job, so I had to immigrate to the country of illusions, leaving my family, my friends and everything one cares about.

This could be a bad scene from a movie. This situation has provoked tremendous anger in me against this system. I hope my wife and family have the same reaction and that it strengthens our conviction to organize to destroy this system. Everything we're living through is caused by a system that cannot solve the problems of the working class.

This letter has been hard to write, but I really want to share my experiences with the CHALLENGE readers, including those in Mexico.

A while ago the Fidel Castro regime was sharply criticized, reporting that people had to leave Cuba or die of hunger. Part of my motivation in writing this letter is to say that immigration is not exclusive to Cuba but a product of the unemployment produced by capitalism. I hope this letter helps motivate those who read it to continue organizing, and together to replace this system with one that will meet workers' needs without dividing families.

A comrade

Capitalism and Winter Deadly for Homeless

In Minneapolis capitalism and a harsh winter are a deadly combination for homeless workers. This January was the coldest since 1996. Many workers in Minneapolis-St. Paul have a serious homeless problem. Because of the economy, affordable housing is non-existent. Minneapolis leads the nation in this regard, ahead of Chicago and San Francisco.

The bosses are building plenty of luxury condominiums here. The Party is absolutely right in saying that capitalism produces for profit, not for need.

In the Twin Cities, the homeless are disproportionately black or Native American due to racism. Homeless workers are turned away from overcrowded shelters, given blankets and told to walk to the next

shelter, about two miles away! Workers are sent out to risk death in 40° below zero temperature. Capitalism is truly criminal.

There's \$87 billion available for U.S. imperialist adventures in Iraq, but nothing for homeless workers, many of whom are veterans of the last Gulf War and from Vietnam. U.S. imperialism used them and threw them away.

Governor Pawlety says he "wants to solve" Minnesota's homeless problem, but he can't. He's a servant of the ruling class. He threw 20,000 workers off Minnesota Care, the affordable health insurance here.

Workers must join PLP to destroy capitalism and create a communist society. Then the working class will erect homes based on need. Money and profits won't exist. "To each according to needs" is a world worth fighting for. March on May Day for communist revolution.

Minnesota Red

Grocery Strikers Break With Union Hacks

My friend is on strike against the California grocery bosses and was forced to find another job. Many rank-and-filers are dispirited. The last union-organized event showed the union leadership is not fighting for the workers. Over 14,000 people marched in a massive demonstration along a terrible route only four blocks long. It's good that so many people came, but the leadership led them into an isolated part of Inglewood through empty streets. At the end the street was blocked with a stage where they made speeches telling us to vote for capitalist politicians.

I marched with the father and sister of my striker-friend. The strike has provoked much anger and frustration among supporters of the workers. My friend's father said it was like having a demonstration in their dining room, not taking it out to the public. He thought it should be held in downtown LA where throngs of people could see it and join. I added that, with appropriate leadership, markets along the route could have been shut down by the marchers.

After picketing every day, my striking friend stopped going because the union retreated, not allowing Ralph's Store workers to picket their own workplaces. She was assigned to a Pavillions store far from her home. No wonder morale is low. The union leadership is to blame. It's no exaggeration to picture them holding hands with the bosses, selling out the 70,000 strikers. Meanwhile, union chief Rick Icaza's \$273,000 yearly salary was not cut one cent during the walkout.

Some friends and I started circulating a petition demanding regular meetings to inform everyone as well as a more militant union effort. The striker's sister said demonstrations and strikes are not as militant as they used to be, when they stopped production and scabs. That's exactly what workers need to do to cut off the bosses' profits. That's why we need class consciousness and communist leaders who organize the potential power of the working class, not union leaders who only want to control our anger and manipulate us into dead ends.

A striker's friend

How A Young Communist Honored Stalin At His Death

We in PLP don't believe in building "cults of personality," but the working-class movement has great ancestry!

The great communist leader Joseph Stalin died 51 years ago. Among working-class people and many others, he was the most loved and respected person in the world because he represented the great achievements of the Soviet Union and the world communist movement. That love and respect can be measured, partly, by the witness of ordinary people.

One such person, V.A Atsiukovsky, eventually became a physicist and engineer. In 1994, past retirement age, he wrote "Communism — the Future of the Human Race. The account below is excerpted from his autobiography, The Adventures of an Engineer, the Notes of an Activist, 1998.

Joseph Stalin died on March 5, 1953. For the overwhelming majority of my generation, which had not fought in the war, and of the older generation that did, Stalin's death was an immense tragedy. Of course, among us there were people who were silently glad at his death, but at that time they didn't dare breath a word of such feelings. Later they tried hard to...disgrace not only Stalin but everything that had been done in his time. But during those days we were seized with grief, and with a single thought — to go to Moscow to pay our respects to our deceased Leader and Teacher.

Our plan was to use local commuter trains to get through all the cordons, which would...be stationed...to prevent any great crowds in Moscow, and then on the most distant train, which would no doubt still be running, to get to our goal.

My plan could not have worked better. Lying on the floor under a shelf in an almost empty commuter-train car, I heard patrols walking the platform at Liuban and stopping someone, but no one even entered the car I was in; soon the train moved farther along....



I managed to find a seat in the farthest train, which was completely packed, arriving in Moscow on the morning of the second day of the funeral, and set off to say goodbye to Stalin.

I managed to get through to Sverdlov Square only because I was wearing a military overcoat.... Towards the evening...there were about 100 persons, "interlopers" like me, gathered together.

About seven o'clock on the third day..., we were formed into a general column and, with us, began that gigantic line of those who wished to bid farewell to Stalin, a line that stretched throughout the whole of Moscow. ... I went with the first group of 100, said farewell to the person for whom I had the most respect of anyone in the world, and went home to my Institute dormitory.

....Two days [later] I was called into the Young Communist bureau of my faculty...to give my explanation of how I had dared to abandon my Institute during such a time. ...

"Did you understand that it was forbidden to go to Moscow?" they asked me.

"Of course!"

"And did you know that you'd get into trouble for that?"

"Of course!"

"And you went anyway? And will you do it again the next time?"

"How can there be a 'next time'! We only had one Stalin, and I went to say farewell to him, and not to you. There cannot be any 'next time.'"

"And you don't regret that you did this?"

"I don't regret it," I answered.☺

Movie Makes Anti-Fascist 'Statement'

I recently saw "The Statement," starring Michael Caine and directed by liberal humanist Norman Jewison. The movie opens with French Nazis, called the Milice, killing seven Jewish workers. Then fast-forward to the present where a hit man, allegedly working for a Jewish Commando team, is hunting one of the Milice, Pierre Brossard.

Meanwhile, two French officials are also looking for Brossard. He's guilty of crimes against humanity, based on a law passed to run down old fascists once and for all. But one of the officials, a woman who is an investigating judge, is looking for Brossard so he can identify a powerful member of the French government who also belonged to the Milice. The ending is pretty ironic and because it's a vital part of the movie, I won't give it away.

While the movie deals with the hunt for Brossard and his frantic efforts to escape, it also reveals how sections of the Roman Catholic Church in France helped hide Nazi collaborators after World War II, and how sections of the French police and "justice" system helped Nazis avoid punishment. The movie is very compelling in depicting the chief character, Brossard, as both a cunning fugitive, a vicious, treacherous member of the French Nazi movement, and a frightened, true-believing, right-wing Catholic. Simultaneously, it shows the dedication of the French anti-fascist officials in taking on both the church and members of the government. So, there's a lot of detective work going on.

Clearly Jewison is not a communist, but he does give communists and Uncle Joe (Stalin) their due as leaders of the anti-Nazi resistance. Indeed, one reason why a section of the Catholic Church supported the Nazis was their belief that Stalin was the "anti-Christ" and that the "Jews" created communism.



Michael Caine

Could the same group be behind Mel Gibson's anti-Jewish version of the crucifixion?

However, like most bourgeois humanist movies, Jewison says the system is basically O.K. and that dedicated seekers of justice will eliminate the "bad guys" who are the problem. What's not shown is how racist ideology was used to create a Brossard, and how anti-Jewish racism was a cornerstone of Nazi capitalism.

This movie is a good starting point for discussions about Nazi fascism, the old "alliance" of Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt, and the major role of the police in the fascist movement. Most important, we can discuss the positives and negatives of the old communist movement, to avoid the same mistakes of allying with liberal and conservative anti-fascists in current and future wars.

One last point: the movie was never shown in Chicago itself. I had to go to suburban Wilmette to see it. While the neo-fascist LORD OF THE RING gets massive publicity and mass showings, curiously a film about fighting fascism, with pro-communist sympathies, gets shown way out of town.

An Old World War II Participant

RED EYE ON THE NEWS

BELOW ARE EXCERPTS FROM MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS THAT CONTAIN IMPORTANT INFORMATION:Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly (UK)

Liars push 'job training'

For 20 years, every job crisis...has been met with calls for retraining....

The trouble is, it doesn't work, and the government knows it. The most comprehensive evaluation of training programs, conducted by the Department of Labor, followed 20,000 people over four years. For the vast majority, the government concluded that training made no difference whatsoever.

People got the same kind of jobs whether or not they'd been through the program....

In studying more than 40 years of job training policy,...not...one program...,on average, enabled its participants to earn their way out of poverty....

There are simply not enough decent-paying jobs....

In this context, to promote training in order to make workers think that unemployment is their own fault is a cruel joke.... (L.A. Times)

Imperialists always use lies

In 1846 President James Polk announced that Mexican troops had fired on American

soldiers on American soil, and he took the country to war that eventually gained it California, New Mexico and Arizona. Was the disputed soil ours? Probably not. Did Polk distort the information he had? Almost certainly. He wanted the territory, and he needed a war to get it....

Presidents and other decision-makers usually get the intelligence they want....In 1961...I climbed to...a high-level meeting to discuss the planned invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs....Richard Bissell, a legendary figure of cold war intelligence,...assured us that once the American-backed rebels had established themselves, the Cuban people would rise up against Castro....

In 1967....our Vietnam intelligence ... could have been off by 10 percent or by 300 percent because "the data is so soft that we cannot state with confidence whether we have been doing better or worse militarily over the past year...." The generals and the president wanted higher body counts....and that's what they got.

Those now trying to figure out what went wrong before the war in Iraq should bear in mind a simple truth: we [U.S. rulers] are more likely to "know" what we want to know than what we don't want to know.

(Richard Goodwin was a White House assistant to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson.) (NYT)

US women's pay really 44% of men's

In a study commissioned by Representatives Carolyn Maloney and John Dingell, the federal General Accounting office reported that women's earnings in proportion to men have actually gone backward. In 1983 it was 80.4 cents for every dollar for men. It is now 79.7.

Conservatives argue that it is due to women's work patterns — leaving for child care, elder care, following husbands to new areas, etc. This study of more than 9,300 citizens and 18 years of data indicates that if these things were not [sic] factored in it would have been an astounding 44 cents to every dollar! (Liberal Opinion Week, 2/3)

Real disaster: the system

Millions of lives could be saved if poor



countries were better prepared for natural disasters that now kill on average nearly 70,000 people each year....

Wealthy countries represent 15 percent of the population exposed to natural disasters but fewer than 2 percent of the deaths. The very poorest countries contain 11 percent of all those exposed to disasters, but account for 53 percent of the deaths.

"In a sense, this report is arguing that there is nothing natural about these disasters." (Financial Times, 2/3)

25 Years Ago, PLP Led Anti-Racist Struggle that Crushed the Nazi Hold on Marquette Park

(This begins a three-part series on events leading up to the May Day March that integrated Chicago's Marquette Park in 1979.)

Marquette Park is an area of the city as well as a major park. In 1977, it was strictly off limits to black people. It was the home of racist cops, firemen and city workers. The primarily Baltic and Lithuanian neighborhood has a long history of segregated housing imposed by Chicago's industrial bosses and bankers. Segregation has always been one of the bosses' main weapons in dividing workers and maintaining state power. The U.S. State Department made it a relocation point for Nazi war criminals after World War II. So when the Nazis established headquarters at Rockwell and 71st St., quite a few people supported them. Part of their purpose was to terrorize any anti-racist white people.

In 1964, Martin Luther King, Jr. was violently attacked when he tried to march there for open housing, and bring his campaign of non-violence to the north. Hundreds of marchers were pelted with rocks, bottles, bricks and cherry bombs. As racist Mayor Daley's police looked on, King was hit in the head by a rock and the march retreated in disarray. After that, no other attempt was made to integrate Marquette Park for more than a decade.

In 1977, the Nazis planned to march in Skokie, a community with a large Jewish population of Holocaust survivors. The Democratic Party, with the support of then-president Jimmy Carter, offered up Marquette Park as an alternative. The Nazis took it and thousands turned out under the protective eyes of the Chicago Nazis in blue. It was the biggest pro-Nazi rally since before WWII. Hundreds of racist white youth wore T-shirts reading, "6 Million More." A few brave Holocaust survivors went into the rally to shout



at the Nazis. Several anti-racists were beaten while the KKKops looked on.

But some anti-racists sent a few Nazis to the hospital. PLP and the International Committee Against Racism (INCAR), along with hundreds of other anti-racists, were held at bay at police barricades inside the black community. Sellout community leaders told their members to either stay home or to attend a prayer vigil far from the barricades. Thousands of INCAR and PLP leaflets and CHALLENGES were distributed at street corner rallies. This event triggered the plan to stage a communist/anti-racist rally in Marquette Park in the spring of 1978.

Spurred on by black industrial workers from Ford, U.S. Steel and Stewart-Warner, more black teachers, county, state and city workers were moving west toward Marquette Park like a great internal migration. They fueled the movement west of the Dan Ryan expressway, a canyon between black and white Chicago on the south side. One by one barriers began to fall, Halsted, Ashland, Damen, and finally Western Avenue, the eastern border of Marquette Park.

The Nazis would make raids across Western. A black worker had his hand blown off by a bomb in his mailbox.

The Nazis would smash cars and paint racist graffiti. Any black or dark skinned person caught at the White Castle at Western and 67th St., when Nazis were around, were attacked and beaten, along with their white friends. Blacks who worked at the hospital there were often harassed waiting for the bus. Often their white co-workers would defend them. Meanwhile, black and white leaders of the Chicago Democratic Party did nothing. The Nazis seemed invincible. They were interviewed by radio and TV talk shows and newspapers, which ran pictures of Nazis in full uniform.

In June 1978, the Nazis began a series of rallies in suburban areas undergoing desegregation: South Holland, Lansing, Blue Island, Berwyn, Oak Park, and Evanston. The Nazi assaults were continuing, rallying in shopping centers and recruiting high school students. If we were to prepare for a successful march in Marquette Park, we had to take the fight to them.

The offensive began with picketing Nazi Headquarters during their Midwest Conference. We used leaflets and CHALLENGE sales around the area. We met with friends in the black community and in Marquette Park itself. We held forums on the role of

Nazi racism. INCAR spread a petition to kick the Nazis out of Marquette Park.

On the day of the Nazi meeting, we put out a fake leaflet calling for a demonstration at an incorrect time, to throw off the police protecting the Nazi HQ. Carloads of INCAR and PLP members met at a park. A security team, armed with clubs and baseball bats, would protect the pickets. Their job was to secure the area in front of the Nazi office.

Three cars led the way. We crossed Western, into the all-white area, to Nazi HQ with its Nazi flag and the hateful racist sign on the side of the building. We jumped out and started shouting "Death, Death, Death to the Nazis; Power, Power, Power to the Workers!" The Nazi security team emerged from the HQ and a battle erupted.

Communists and anti-racists fought the Nazis in the street. Storm troopers tasted our bats, picket signs and fists. The Nazis fought back with sticks and mace. We suffered some injuries and a few comrades were arrested. After our attack, people shared their exhilaration of having participated in the action.

Pictures and stories about the fight appeared in the local papers and CHALLENGE, and many people around the city applauded our action. One picture of a group of comrades attacking a Nazi appeared on thousands of leaflets and was printed in the Chicago Defender, a major black newspaper, as a part of an ad announcing our May Day march. We had raised the red flag outside the Nazi office. Next we would raise it inside.

(Part. II: The PLP Raid on the Nazi Office)

Non-Violence Can't Beat Fascists

CHICAGO — "I was a young man in Alabama when Dr. King was organizing there. He said that if you didn't believe in non-violence, you couldn't march with him. I didn't believe in non-violence."

So declared a black worker at a forum on the history of "Marquette Park — Then and Now," the neighborhood where he currently resides. The forum was sponsored by the International Human Relations Commission, a coalition of neighborhood organizations formed by the city in response to the post-9/11 attacks against Arab and Muslim residents.

Historically, Marquette Park was the most racist neighborhood in Chicago, all white, with its own Nazi party office, as well as many resettled World War II Nazis, cops and city workers. No black workers had ever lived there. Black workers who ventured into the area were regularly attacked. Today Marquette Park is a mix of black, Latin, white and Arab workers, due in part to the fight waged by Progressive Labor Party.

PLP broke the back of this racism when we organized an anti-racist campaign to smash the Nazis and

integrate Marquette Park. A PLP speaker told how in 1978, amid massive publicity about the Nazis' planned march in Skokie (a largely Jewish town), dozens of PLP members and friends invaded the Nazi office and physically smashed them. This raid ended the Nazis' "myth of invincibility" and led to their

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demise. In 1979, PLP organized a May Day march of 700 black, Latin and white workers and youth to integrate Marquette Park and finish off that particular Nazi group.

The PL'er's speech sparked a spirited discussion about the need for violence as against non-violence. One speaker, Rev. John Porter, had brought Martin Luther King to Marquette Park in the mid-1960's, and

racists violently attacked their march. A PLP member pointed out that it was the non-violence of people like King that emboldened the racists, who were definitely not non-violent.

Several other speakers talked about their experiences fighting racism in this area. One explained that the real estate agents and their bankers made millions out of block-busting and red-lining, and kept up a barrage of racist lies to keep white workers fearful of blacks moving into "their" neighborhood.

Most accounts of fighting racism and segregation lacked a real class analysis. The real cause of racism is the capitalist profit system. The only solution is communist revolution.

On the 25th anniversary of the integration of Marquette Park, official government policy far surpasses the level of racism and fascist terror those Nazis ever dreamed of. This May Day we continue the struggle to build a mass international PLP that can grow under fascism and prepare for the workers' seizure of power. ☸